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# Cultural Values and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction in Mexican Adolescents: The Moderating Effects of Parental Psychological Control and Gender

Alexander Reid

*University of Connecticut - Storrs*, [alexander.reid@uconn.edu](mailto:alexander.reid@uconn.edu)

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Cultural Values and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction in Mexican Adolescents: The  
Moderating Effects of Parental Psychological Control and Gender

Alexander Reid, PhD

University of Connecticut, 2018

Guided by a developmental contextual (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Ford & Lerner, 1992) and Collins's (2003) five-feature framework on adolescent romantic relationships, the goal of this study was to examine whether perceived mothers' and fathers' psychological control and gender moderated the associations between cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity) and romantic relationship satisfaction in Mexican adolescents. Self-report survey data collected from 214 adolescents ( $M = 14.59$  years old; 50.5% girls) from two public schools in Mexico reported on their age, gender, endorsement of cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity), perceived parental psychological control, and romantic relationship satisfaction. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were conducted on a romantic relationship satisfaction scale, as this scale has yet to be validated in a sample of Mexican adolescents. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to test the interactions between cultural values, mothers' and fathers' psychological control, and gender on romantic relationship satisfaction. Findings revealed adolescents who endorsed caballerismo reported higher relationship satisfaction. These associations were strongest for female adolescents reporting low maternal psychological control and male adolescents reporting high maternal psychological control. No main effects or interactions were found with machismo, views of female virginity, psychological control, and gender on romantic relationship satisfaction. These findings may be useful to practitioners working with Mexican adolescents such as school mental

# MEXICAN ADOLESCENTS' ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIP SATISFACTION

Alexander Reid – University of Connecticut, 2018

health counselors, as romantic relationships are a common but overlooked component to normative adolescent development.

Cultural Values and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction in Mexican Adolescents: The  
Moderating Effects of Parental Psychological Control and Gender

Alexander Reid

B.A., California State University Northridge, 2012

M.A., California State University Northridge, 2014

A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

at the

University of Connecticut

2018

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2018

APPROVAL PAGE

Doctor of Philosophy Dissertation

Cultural Values and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction in Mexican Adolescents: The  
Moderating Effects of Parental Psychological Control and Gender

Presented by  
Alexander Reid, B.A., M.A.

Major Advisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Linda C. Halgunseth, Ph.D.

Associate Advisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Annamaria Csizmadia, Ph.D.

Associate Advisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Noel Card, Ph.D.

Associate Advisor \_\_\_\_\_  
Graciela Espinosa-Hernandez, Ph.D.

University of Connecticut  
2018

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my committee members who supported my efforts in writing this dissertation.

To my chair, Dr. Linda Halgunseth, thank you for being the best advisor a student could ever have. I appreciate you making time in your schedule to continuously revise and edit my dissertation, and allowing me to defend in time for my faculty appointment. In addition to being brilliant and hardworking, you are also very patient and compassionate, making the dissertation process enjoyable and easy. Thank you for all of your professional guidance, emotional support, and friendship over the past four years. It has been an honor to be your student. I look forward to expanding our academic family in this next chapter of my career at CSUB, and will pass onto my students the skills and values you have imparted onto me.

To Dr. Annamaria Csizmadia, thank you for being a wonderful committee member, as your feedback and edits were very helpful and greatly appreciated. Thank you for joining me in all the early WebEx meetings, being so quick to respond to emails, and for helping to bring life to this project. Your support in this past year was essential.

To Dr. Noel Card, thank you for teaching me everything I know about MPlus, dyadic data analyses, and meta-analyses. Thank you for your statistical guidance throughout the dissertation process and for being a magnificent stats instructor. Also, thank you for indirectly giving me the opportunity to teach family interaction processes for two semesters. That was fun.

To Dr. Graciela Espinosa-Hernandez, thank you for sharing your dataset with me to make this dissertation possible. In addition to providing very helpful feedback, I also appreciate you allowing me to practice my presentations via WebEx to your lab. I would like to extend my gratitude to the members of your lab for all of their help in this process as well.

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## Chapter 1

### **Cultural Values and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction in Mexican Adolescents: The Moderating Effects of Parental Psychological Control**

Adolescence is a developmental period characterized by the growth of autonomy in personal and social contexts (Karabanova & Poskrebysheva, 2013). Consistent with this newly developed autonomy, adolescents begin engaging in romantic relationships (Connolly, Furman, & Konarski, 2000). These romantic relationships possess developmental significance, as the task of successfully forming an intimate and satisfying romantic relationship may have implications for adolescents' psychological adjustment (Reid, Halgunseth, Espinosa-Hernández, & Vasilenko, 2018) future adaptation (Roisman, Masten, Coatsworth, & Tellegen, 2004).

Collins's (2003) framework recognizes *quality* as one important component of adolescents' romantic relationships. Romantic relationship quality refers to the extent to which one benefits from the romantic partnership. Past research has shown that the quality of adolescents' romantic experiences may be influenced by cultural norms and values (Tyrell, Wheeler, Gonzales, Dumka, & Millsap, 2014) and parent-adolescent relationships (Bouris et al., 2012; Romo, Lefkowitz, Sigman, & Au, 2002). Few studies, however, have explored these associations in Mexican adolescents, a population that endorses strong cultural values and gender socialization norms in the context of romantic relationships (Halgunseth, Espinosa-Hernandez, & Van Duzor, 2014).

One indicator of adolescents' romantic relationship quality is their perceived romantic relationship satisfaction (Funk & Rogge, 2007). Romantic satisfaction is characterized by an overall perception of contentment in one's romantic relationship (Hendrick, 1988), with higher relationship satisfaction typically depicted by feelings of happiness in the context of the

relationship (Moosmann & Roosa, 2015). In a sample of Mexican American adolescents ( $M_{age} = 17.86$ ), Moosmann and Roosa (2015) found that higher romantic relationship satisfaction was positively associated with higher self-esteem and greater future family expectations.

Additionally, negative romantic experiences (e.g., conflict, rejection) have been linked to symptoms of depression and anxiety in Mexican adolescents (Reid, Halgunseth, Espinosa-Hernandez, & Vasilenko, 2018).

A developmental-contextual framework (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Ford & Lerner, 1992) is also useful in understanding the conditions under which romantic relationships are formed during adolescence. This perspective considers the impact of environmental influences on adolescents (e.g., parent-adolescent relationships, cultural norms), in addition to the biological changes (e.g., aging, puberty) that occur during this developmental period (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Ford & Lerner, 1992). According to the developmental-contextual perspective, adolescents' romantic relationship development and quality should consider cultural values instilled by societal gender norms and expectations (Tyrell et al., 2014). Adolescents may perceive cultural values as guidelines of what behaviors and attitudes are expected of them, thus helping them make sense of their close relationships. Cultural values influenced by gender norms that have been recognized to be prevalent in Latino families include machismo (men should possess hyper-masculine traits; Glass & Owen, 2010), caballerismo (men should be respectful and noble towards women; Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008) and marianismo (women should be sexually pure until marriage and have a strong moral compass; Castillo, Perez, Castillo, & Ghosheh, 2010; Deardorff, Tschann, & Flores, 2008).

### **Cultural Values and Romantic Relationship Satisfaction**

The literature has documented a clear connection between Latino cultural values and the Catholic religion (Deardorff, Tschann, Flores, & Ozer, 2010; Sanchez, Dillon, Concha, & de la Rosa, 2015). The teachings of Catholicism place special emphasis on Latino cultural values that are rooted in gender socialization norms. These attitudes and behaviors associated with values may become ingrained in Latino adolescents as they are reinforced through familial and cultural rituals (Russel & Romero, 2010). This study will examine three prominent cultural values in Mexico: Machismo, caballerismo, and views of female virginity.

#### **Machismo**

Machismo is a cultural value rooted in gender socialization norms that refers to a man's obligation to provide for and protect his family (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008). Traditional machismo is characterized by hyper-masculine traits, including expressing dominance over others, displaying chauvinistic behaviors, and sexual aggression. Much of the existing literature that explores the construct of machismo in adolescents assesses machismo in relation to individual maladjustment. Studies have demonstrated that valuing machismo may serve as a risk factor in Latino adolescents. For example, previous research has shown that machismo is negatively associated with educational aspirations (Piña-Watson, Lorenzo-Blanco, Dornhecker, Martinez, & Nagoshi, 2015) in Mexican American adolescents, and positively associated with alcohol usage (Soto et al., 2011) and depressive symptoms (Céspedes & Huey Jr., 2008) in U.S. based Latino adolescents.

While research has demonstrated that Latino adolescents endorse traditional values of machismo (Céspedes & Huey Jr., 2008); there is a dearth of literature exploring these values with Mexican samples in the context of their romantic relationships. One exception is Pardo,

Weisfeld, Hill, and Slatcher (2013), who explored the effects of machismo on marital satisfaction in a sample of Mexican American couples ( $M_{age} = 37.30$ ). They found that husbands who subscribed to more traditional views of machismo (e.g., dominance, aggressiveness) also reported poorer relationship satisfaction (e.g., lower emotional attachment to spouse). It is possible that when men endorse strong views of traditional machismo, their aggressive behaviors may alienate their spouses and foster a lack of intimacy between the partners. This lack of intimacy and emotional closeness may, in turn, promote less marital satisfaction (Patrick, Sells, Giordano, & Tollerud, 2007). Pardo et al. also found that the links between machismo and relationship satisfaction were strong for couples' low in acculturation, but not for couples who were highly acculturated. It is likely that the values of machismo are more consistent with what is culturally acceptable to couples that have low acculturation; thus, one's endorsement of machismo positively links to relationship satisfaction.

Developmental-contextual (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Ford & Lerner, 1992) and Collins' (2003) frameworks suggest that adolescents' romantic relationship experiences may be influenced by cultural values. As they begin to develop secondary sexual characteristics, adolescents may be under increased pressure to conform to traditional gender role expectations (Hill & Lynch, 1983). Adolescents who support traditional gender roles may endorse behaviors associated with machismo, which may become more salient as adolescents engage in romantic relationships (Milbrath, Ohlson, & Eyre, 2009). As Mexico provides its own context in which to study adolescent romantic relationships, it would be beneficial to explore these associations in Mexican adolescents. Recently, researchers have started to explore the positive and negative dimensions of machismo separately, referring to the positive aspects as *caballerismo* (Arciniega et al., 2008).

## **Caballerismo**

*Caballerismo* stems from the word *caballero* [gentleman], a provider who is loyal and dependable to his family (Pardo, 2017). The cultural value of caballerismo promotes the idea that men are expected to be well mannered, noble, sincere, and respectful toward women. In their study on Mexican American couples, Pardo et al. (2013) found that dimensions of caballerismo (e.g., relationship accountability) were associated with higher relationship satisfaction (e.g., stronger emotional attachment to spouse). This may be because men who endorse caballerismo are more likely to be empathetic and compassionate toward their partners (Arciniega et al., 2008). These feelings of empathy and compassion may help men foster intimacy between their spouses, which ultimately results in higher relationship satisfaction.

Consistent with Pardo et al. (2013), Rueda and Williams (2016) explored the positive dimensions of caballerismo (e.g., desire to provide for female partner) among Mexican American adolescent couples ( $M_{age} = 16.25$ ). In their exploratory qualitative study, Rueda and Williams found that all couples demonstrated some degree of caballerismo in their recorded conversations. Caballerismo was displayed to better cultivate a relationship understanding, as boys demonstrated affection and relationship accountability during their dialogues with their female partners. In many instances, boys became emotionally available, as opposed to aggressive and domineering (i.e., traditional machismo). To address the lack of research on caballerismo in the context of adolescent romantic relationships, future studies are needed to better understand the association between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction. Studies using Mexican American samples (e.g., Pardo et al.; Rueda & Williams) provide insight to the nature of these associations; however, must factor in the component of acculturation to their U.S. samples. Future studies should explore the impact of machismo and caballerismo on adolescent romantic

relationships in Mexico, a country where these cultural values are strongly endorsed (Gutmann, 1996). Machismo and caballerismo provide guidelines pertaining to the socialization of men. It is also important to investigate cultural values associated with the socialization of women and its link to Mexican adolescents' romantic relationship development.

### **Views of Female Virginity**

Female virginity, a tenet of marianismo (i.e., women should be chaste, submissive to men, and have a strong moral compass), is a cultural and religious value rooted in female gender-role expectations that emphasizes sexual purity in girls and women (Castillo et al., 2010; Deardorff et al., 2008). Research investigating the role that views of female virginity have on romantic relationship quality in U.S. based and non U.S. based Latino adolescents is scarce. In a sample of 973 Mexican adolescents ( $M_{age} = 15.14$ ), Reid et al. (2018) found that girls who experienced conflict and rejection in romantic relationships and endorsed strong views of female virginity experienced more symptoms of anxiety than girls with low values of female virginity. The researchers explained that Mexican female adolescents who experience negative romantic events and who strongly endorse female virginity may experience high levels of anxiety because they may attribute that the negative events are because they are abstaining from sexual behaviors with their romantic partner. The discrepancy between girls' perceived sociocultural expectations and their partner's pressure to have sex may foster anxiety, and hence conflict between the couple, which ultimately may lead to poorer relationship satisfaction (Reid et al.).

The majority of research investigating views of female virginity in Latino adolescents is conducted within the context of adolescent sexuality. Sanchez, Whittaker, Hamilton, and Zayas (2016) investigated the relationship between virtuousness/chastity and sexual behaviors and attitudes among Mexican American middle-school girls. They found negative correlations



between views of virtuousness/chastity and attitudes regarding sexual behaviors, and actual sexual precursor behaviors (e.g., spending time alone with a boy, romantically kissing). The results suggest that when Mexican American adolescents place a strong value on their virginity, they are less likely to engage in physically intimate behaviors. Similar associations were established by Espinosa-Hernandez, Vasilenko, and Bámaca-Colbert (2015), who found that views of female virginity were negatively associated with making out, oral sex, and vaginal sex in a sample of adolescents in Mexico. Although romantic relationship status was not assessed in either of the aforementioned studies, it is likely that adolescents who endorse views of female virginity are more inclined to abstain from engaging in sexual behaviors within the context of a romantic relationship (Sanchez et al., 2016). Guilamo-Ramos and colleagues (2009) posited that Latino (i.e., Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Mexican) adolescents seek out romantic partners who endorse similar cultural values. Mexican adolescents who believe girls should not engage in sexual intercourse until marriage may be more likely to date partners with similar beliefs. Mexican adolescents who abstain from having sex may place a greater emphasis on developing positive romantic relationships, with the intention of extending the family unit.

As illustrated above, most of the existent research on Latino cultural values in the context of adolescent romantic relationships focuses on the association between value endorsement and sexual attitudes/behaviors (e.g., Edwards, Fehring, Jarrett, & Haglund, 2008; Ma et al., 2014). There is, however, a lack of research on the association between cultural values and romantic relationship quality in Mexican adolescents. Previous research has demonstrated links between romantic relationship experiences and psychological adjustment in Latino adolescents (La Greca & Harrison 2005; Moosmann & Roosa, 2015; Reid et al., 2018). Given that it has been documented that Mexican youth are at high risk for mental health issues (Benjet, Borges,

Medina-Mora, Zambrano, & Aguilar-Gaxiola, 2009), it may be beneficial for researchers to further investigate the influence of Latino cultural values on romantic relationship quality in Mexican adolescents.

### **Parental Psychological Control as a Risk Factor**

Developmental-contextual frameworks (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Lerner & Ford, 1992) are useful for explaining how parent-adolescent dynamics may serve as an important context in which to study romantic relationship satisfaction for Latino adolescents. When parents display nurturing and warm behaviors toward their youth, it creates a supportive context that may promote the development of other healthy relationships (Mikulincer & Shaver, 2007).

Additionally, adolescents' perceptions of their parents' behaviors may impact the context in which adolescents develop and sustain healthy romantic relationships (Ainsworth, 1989; Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Rohner, Melendez, & Kraimer-Rickaby, 2008). While previous studies have examined the context of parental support as an important factor in understanding adolescents' capacity to develop romantic relationships (Collins, Welsh, & Furman, 2009; Conger, Cui, Bryant, & Elder, 2000), less is understood about the context of parental psychological control.

Psychological controlling behaviors are characterized as intrusive behaviors (e.g., guilt induction, love withdrawal, coercion), which may hinder the emotional development of a child (Barber, 1996). Studies have shown that perceptions of parents' psychologically controlling behaviors may serve as a risk factor for adolescent adjustment, as parental psychological control has been associated with lower self-esteem in Latino adolescents (Bean & Northrup, 2009) and depressive symptoms in Mexican American adolescents (Sher-Censor, Parke, & Coltrane, 2011). When parents engage in psychologically controlling behaviors with their adolescents, the adolescents may doubt their own competence and ability to make decisions (Barber, 2002;

Peterson, 2005). One study using a sample of 662 Latino adolescents ( $M_{age} = 14.3$  years) found that perceived maternal and paternal psychological control was negatively associated with adolescents' general self-efficacy (Yomtov, Plunkett, Sands, & Reid, 2015). Yomtov et al. also found that perceived maternal and paternal psychological control was negatively linked to relational self-esteem for girls, while only paternal psychological control was significantly associated with relational self-esteem for boys. Thus, it is possible that when adolescents perceive their parents to be engaging in psychologically controlling behaviors, this may be a risk factor in that it may serve as a negative context in which adolescents experience romantic relationships.

Psychologically controlling behaviors are commonly practiced among parents of collectivistic cultures (Rudy & Halgunseth, 2005), such as Mexico (Bornstein, 1994). Using an ethnically diverse sample, Rudy and Halgunseth (2005) found that parents from collectivistic cultures were more likely to use psychological control as a parenting technique than parents from individualistic cultures. In a qualitative study, Yau and Watkins (2018) found that Mexican American mothers viewed psychological control as an appropriate tactic of controlling and disciplining children. Previous studies have characterized Latino parenting behaviors to be more control and discipline-oriented, and less supportive (Florsheim, Tolan, & Gorman-Smith, 1996). It is possible that adolescents who perceive their parents to be engaging in psychologically controlling behaviors feel a lack of support from their parents, as research consistently demonstrates a negative association between perceived parental support and psychological control (Plunkett, Henry, Robinson, Behnke, & Falcon, 2007).

Few studies have explored perceived parental psychological control in the context of adolescent romantic relationships. Tuggle, Kerpelman, and Pittman (2014) explored the

relationship between adolescents' perceptions of their parents' psychological control and relationship satisfaction in a sample of 1,680 adolescents ( $M_{age} = 12.9$ ). Their findings indicated that perceived parental psychological control was positively associated with adolescents' relationship controlling behaviors (i.e., feeling possessed by their romantic partner), which in turn, was associated with lower relationship satisfaction. To my knowledge, no studies have researched the associations between parental psychological control and romantic relationship satisfaction in Mexican adolescents. Given that literature has acknowledged the influence of parental behaviors on adolescent romantic relationship development (Guilamo-Ramos et al., 2007; Tyrell et al., 2014) and the prevalence of psychological control in Mexico (Bornstein, 1994), it is important to examine whether parental psychologically controlling behaviors serve as a risk factor romantic relationship quality in Mexican adolescents. Consideration of parental behaviors may foster a better understanding of Mexican adolescents' perceptions of their cultural values and their association with romantic relationship qualities.

### **Cultural Values and Psychological Control**

Ample research exists suggesting that cultural values are associated with positive relational outcomes in Mexican American adolescents in the context of parental support (e.g., Tyrell et al., 2014). However, little is known about the influence of psychological control on this association. According to the developmental-contextual framework (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Lerner & Ford, 1992), research on adolescents' romantic experiences should consider the multiple contexts and interactions between contexts on adolescent development. Thus, it is important that adolescent researchers consider the interaction between cultural values and parental behaviors (e.g., psychological control).

Past findings suggest that parental psychological control may pose a risk for adolescent well being (Pettit, Laird, Dodge, Bates, & Criss, 2001). Yet, no research has examined whether it serves as a risk factor in the association between cultural values and relationship satisfaction. Given past studies in which parental psychological control served as a risk factor for Mexican American adolescents' maladjustment (Sher-Censor et al., 2011), it is possible that parental psychological control may exacerbate the negative association between machismo and romantic relationship satisfaction. Adolescents who endorse machismo may report lower romantic relationship satisfaction if they perceive their parents to be engaging in psychologically controlling behaviors that undermine their autonomy. Adolescent girls who strongly endorse machismo may believe men are superior to women and may hold their fathers' authority in high esteem (Arciniega et al., 2008). When fathers engage in psychologically controlling behaviors, female adolescents may feel a lack of control within their own romantic relationship, fostering lower romantic relationship satisfaction (Auslander, Short, Succop, & Rosenthal, 2009). Psychologically controlling behaviors may diminish the self-efficacy of adolescents high on machismo, which may ultimately promote lower romantic relationship satisfaction.

Values of caballerismo has been positively associated with romantic relationship satisfaction (Pardo et al., 2013). According to Interpersonal Acceptance-Rejection Theory (IPARTheory), psychologically controlling parental behaviors may lead to offspring feeling rejected and unloved (Rohner, 1980; 2014); thus, psychological control may weaken the positive association between caballerismo and adolescent romantic relationship satisfaction. To my knowledge, no studies have explored the association between caballerismo and adolescent romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of parental psychological control; hence, research is needed to address this gap in the literature. Adolescents who endorse caballerismo

may report lower romantic relationship satisfaction if they perceive their parents to be engaging in psychologically controlling behaviors. Female adolescents who support values of *caballerismo* may believe men should be respectful to women (Arciniega et al., 2008). Fathers engaging in psychologically controlling behaviors to assert authority over their daughters may challenge daughters' beliefs on how their fathers should behave. These intrusive behaviors may then negatively influence adolescents' relationships outside the parent-adolescent context (e.g., romantic relationships; Auslander et al., 2009). Adolescent boys who strongly endorse *caballerismo* may feel powerless and undermined when their mothers engage in psychologically controlling behaviors. Adolescent boys who hold their mothers' authority in high regard may internalize their mothers' intrusive and emotionally manipulating behaviors. This might diminish adolescent boys' self-esteem and confidence (Bean & Northrup, 2009), which may negatively impact their other relationships. The current study aims to test the moderating effects of parental psychological control on the association between cultural values and Mexican adolescents' romantic relationship satisfaction.

Previous studies have indicated that endorsing strong views of female virginity is linked to negative emotions (i.e., depressive symptoms) in Mexican American young adult women (Piña-Watson, Castillo, Ojeda, & Rodriguez), and anxiety symptoms in Mexican adolescent boys and girls (Reid et al., 2018). Yet, to my knowledge, no research has examined whether parental psychological control would serve as a risk factor for romantic relationship satisfaction. According to IPARTheory (Rohner, 1980; 2014) psychological control may serve as a risk factor for lower romantic relationship satisfaction. Adolescents who endorse strong views of female virginity may also report lower romantic relationship satisfaction if they feel their parents use psychologically controlling behaviors to guilt or shame them for their behaviors. In a sample of

425 Puerto Rican adolescents ( $M_{age}=13.49$ ), Velez-Pastrana, Gonzalez-Rodriguez, and Borges-Hernandez (2005) explored the relationship between perceived parental behaviors and onset of sexual intercourse. They found that adolescents were more likely to begin engaging in sexual intercourse when they perceived high levels of psychological controlling behaviors (e.g., love withdrawal) from their parents. Female adolescents who endorse views of female virginity who are no longer virgins may report lower romantic relationship satisfaction if they feel their parents use psychologically controlling behaviors (e.g., shame or guilt induction) to control their romantic relationship experiences.

### **Mothers' and Fathers' Psychological Control**

A developmental-contextual framework (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Ford & Lerner, 1992) is useful in understanding the relationship between mothers' and fathers' behaviors and adolescents' gender. Because of the emphasis on cultural values rooted in gender socialization norms, it is important to assess adolescents' perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' psychological control separately. Research has shown that mothers' and fathers' of Mexican American adolescents exhibit different behaviors to their sons and daughters (Updegraff, Delgado, & Wheeler, 2009). In a sample of 246 Mexican immigrant families, Updegraff et al. found that mothers and daughters spent significantly more time with each other than mothers and sons. Mothers also knew more information about their adolescent's daily lives than the fathers, and spent more time with them on shared activities. Additionally, Mexican American mothers viewed themselves as more accepting of their offspring than fathers (Blocklin, Crouter, Updegraff, & McHale, 2011; Updegraff et al.), which resulted in adolescents developing closer relationships with their mothers. Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) explored maternal parenting practices among 63 Dominican and Puerto Rican mother-adolescent pairs (adolescents' age

range 11-14 years). Consistent with other researchers, they found that mothers reported providing acts of care and warmth to their youth, while also maintaining clear guidelines and boundaries. Based on the aforementioned studies, it is likely that the association between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of mothers' psychological control may be different from the context of fathers' psychological control.

Youth are more likely to be influenced by individuals who are objectively similar (e.g., mother-daughter dyad; Bandura, 1986). Hence, it is possible that adolescents' perceptions of mothers' psychological control may be more strongly related to the association between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction in female Mexican adolescents. The current study will assess the moderating effects of perceived mothers' and fathers' psychological control separately to examine the unique contributions of each parent on their adolescent's cultural values associated with their romantic relationship satisfaction, and to avoid issues of multicollinearity between mothers' and fathers' psychological control (Aylin, 2010).

### **Adolescent Gender, Age, and Socioeconomic Status**

It is important that researchers consider the influence of adolescent gender on the associations between cultural values and adolescent romantic relationship satisfaction. Previous research documents that Latino girls and boys report having very different experiences in their romantic relationships (Bouris et al., 2012; Tyrell et al., 2014). In a sample of 702 Latino (38% Dominican, 33% Puerto Rican, 29% Mexican), Bouris et al. found that compared to girls, boys in romantic relationships were more likely to be sexually active and believed that having sex would make them closer to their partners. They also found girls were more likely to date a partner who was older and had more previous romantic relationship experience. Additional findings suggest that Latina girls may place a higher value on intimate relationships than boys. Scholars suggest



that this is because of cultural and societal pressures placed on Latina adolescents to engage in romantic relationships for the purpose of marrying to extend the family unit. Using a longitudinal design, Tyrell et al. explored the associations between gender, cultural values, and romantic relationship quality in 189 Mexican American adolescents ( $M_{age}=12.29$ ). Tyrell et al. found that middle adolescent boys (grade 9) reported lower levels of intimacy than middle adolescent girls, and late adolescent boys (grade 12) reported lower romantic attachment than late adolescent girls. Their findings also indicated adolescents' familism values (e.g., family loyalty, obligation, respect; Knight et al., 2010) were linked to high romantic intimacy. Additional research suggests that romantic experiences may impact Mexican adolescent boys and girls differently in the context of cultural values (e.g., views of female virginity).

Reid et al. (2018) found gender differences in their study on negative romantic experiences, views of female virginity and maladjustment (i.e., depressive and anxiety symptoms) in a sample of 973 Mexican adolescents ( $M_{age}=15.14$ ). They found that Mexican adolescent boys and girls may internalize negative romantic experiences (e.g., conflict, rejection, betrayal) differently in the context of female virginity. They found that the effects of negative romantic experiences on symptoms of anxiety were exacerbated for Mexican female adolescents who endorsed high views of female virginity, while there were no differences in the association between boys who reported high or low values of female virginity. Reid et al. explained that female adolescents who endorse strong views of female virginity may be more prone to internalizing societal and cultural pressures to remain a virgin, in turn, leading to greater feeling of anxiety. It is also possible they are living in more traditional households where their parents prohibit them to date (Raffaelli & Ontai, 2001), making female adolescents uncomfortable when engaging in romantic relationships. Furthermore, female adolescents in more traditional

households may feel the need to hide their romantic relationship from their parents, hindering their ability to seek support from their parents in respect to their romantic relationship.

While not on adolescents, past studies on Latino young adults have found also gender differences on the impact of cultural values on romantic relationship experiences. Raffaelli (2005) conducted an exploratory study to assess differences between male and female reports of adolescent dating experiences in a sample of 166 Latino young adults ( $M_{age} = 21.40$ ). Through self-report surveys, Raffaelli examined young adults' accounts of their adolescence regarding family values and expectations concerning dating experiences, and romantic partner characteristics (e.g., age, ethnicity). Findings indicate that the experiences of Latino male adolescents differed significantly from their female counterpart. On average, female participants reported that they began dating adolescents of the opposite sex at a later age than male participants. Additionally, findings indicate a statistically significant difference in age of first partner for female participants (i.e., an average of 1.36 years), but not for male participants. There was a trend for male participants to report that they had engaged in sexual intercourse prior to becoming involved in a serious romantic relationship, whereas female participants were more likely to engage in sexual intercourse after entering into a serious relationship. Gender socialization norms may account for these differences as girls and young women are taught to follow scripts that emphasize familial obligations (Azmitia & Brown, 2002; Castillo et al., 2010; Sanchez et al., 2016). On the contrary, traditional Latino cultural values encourage young men to promote their masculinity (i.e., machismo), prompting Latino male adolescents to begin dating early and engage in sexual intercourse.

Furthermore, research has explored parental behaviors of boys and girls in the context of adolescent romantic relationships and Latino cultural norms. In their sample of 63 Latino

mother-adolescent dyads, Guilamo-Ramos et al. (2007) found that many mothers treated their sons differently from their daughters. Adhering to cultural and gender socialization norms, mothers believed that boys needed to be given more freedom and girls needed to be protected. Adolescents also discussed the relevance of cultural norms, while providing similar accounts of their mothers' parental behaviors. Researchers may benefit from further investigating how the relationship between cultural values and romantic relationship quality differs between Mexican adolescent boys and girls, and if gender differences exist in the context of parental behaviors (e.g., psychological control). Hence, the current study will test the moderating effect of gender on the association between cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity), mothers' and fathers' psychological control, and romantic relationship satisfaction.

Age is also essential to consider when assessing adolescent romantic relationships in Mexico. Previous scholarship suggests that older adolescents are more likely to be romantically involved than younger adolescents (Arbeau, Galambos, & Mikael Jansson, 2007). In Mexico, age-related behaviors are influenced by gender role expectations. Romantic relationships are expected to end in marriage, particularly for girls and women (Parrado & Zenteno, 2002). Cultural norms deem Mexican girls fit for marriage at the age of 15 (i.e., *la quinceañera*; Tatum, 2014). Given the influence of age on dating norms (Arbeau et al., 2007; Raffaelli, 2005), adolescents' age will also be controlled for in the current study.

It is also important to consider family socioeconomic status (SES) when studying cultural values and romantic relationships in Mexico. Previous literature indicates that mothers and fathers of lower SES are more likely to endorse traditional gender roles (Updegraff, Kuo, Mchale, Umaña-Taylor, & Wheeler, 2017). Because data on SES were not collected, mothers'

and fathers' education level will be used as a proxy variable and will be controlled for in the current study.

### **Purpose of Study**

Scholarship on Mexican adolescent romantic relationship quality is scarce. Mexican adolescents face familial and cultural pressure to engage in romantic relationships that will end in marriage (Halgunseth et al., 2014). The effect of these cultural values on relationship satisfaction may be even more salient in the context of parental psychological control, especially if the parents are using psychologically controlling behaviors to their socialization of cultural values. Guided by the developmental contextual (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Lerner & Ford, 1992) and Collins's (2003) frameworks, the purpose of this study is to explore the moderating effects of mothers' and fathers' psychological control and gender on the association between cultural values rooted in gender socialization norms (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity) and romantic relationship satisfaction in Mexican adolescents. Findings from this study may expand current understanding of the role of parental behaviors in romantic relationship quality among Mexican adolescents.

### **Research Questions**

The following questions will be addressed in this study:

- (1) Do Mexican adolescents' gender and perceptions of their mothers' psychological control moderate the association between their cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity) and romantic relationship satisfaction?
- (2) Do Mexican adolescents' gender and perceptions of their fathers' psychological control moderate the association between their cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity) and romantic relationship satisfaction?

## **Chapter 2**

### **Methodology**

#### **Participants**

Mexican adolescents between the ages of 12 and 20 years old participated in a multi-year study on adolescent health in the cities of Puebla and Cholula, Mexico. Data were used from the third cohort ( $n = 681$ ) of data collection, as it contained the necessary measures for the study. Only participants who reported dating somebody at the time of the survey were included in the analyses. Participants were asked to respond to perceptions of their romantic relationships relative to an individual they were in a serious, committed relationship with, or casually going out with. The subsample included 214 participants (50.5% girls and 49.5% boys). The average age for the sub-sample was 14.59 ( $SD = 1.71$ ) and ranged from 12 to 20 years. This sample was nearly identical to the average age of the total sample (i.e., 14.31). Adolescents reported living in the following family structures: two biological parents (73.4%), biological mother only (14.5%), biological mother and stepfather (5.6%), biological father and stepmother (0.5%), biological father only (.5%), adoptive parents (0.5%), and other (3.7%). Adolescents reported their mothers' having the following education levels: no schooling completed (3.9%), some elementary school (5.9%), elementary school completed (9.3%), some middle school (6.3%), middle school completed (8.8%), some high school (6.3%), high school graduate or equivalency (10.7%), some college (7.3%), associate's degree (2.4%), bachelor's degree (11.7%), master's degree (2.9%), professional school degree (13.7%), and doctorate degree (3.9%). Fathers were reported to have the following education levels: no schooling completed (1.0%), some elementary school (6.7%), elementary school completed (4.7%), some middle school (9.3%), middle school completed (9.3%), some high school (6.2%), high school graduate or equivalency

(7.3%), some college (8.3%), associate's degree (3.6%), bachelor's degree (7.3%), master's degree (6.2%), professional school degree (17.6%), and doctorate degree (5.2%). The majority of the adolescents (93.1%) reported being in a romantic relationship with a partner of the opposite sex.

### **Procedure**

The study procedures were approved by a university institutional review board (IRB), and parents submitted a waiver of written consent for their adolescents to participate in the study. School principals selected the classrooms that were to receive the surveys for the study. Principals then administered the consent forms to the students' parents that outlined the procedures of the study. Parents submitted consent forms only if they did not want their adolescents to partake in the study. Students who were opted out of the study were relocated to another classroom on the day of data collection prior to the arrival of the principal investigator (PI). Before the PI distributed the surveys, the PI informed the students of their rights as participants, and those who assented completed the survey in Spanish during class time in their classrooms. Participants took about 90 minutes to finish the survey and received candy as compensation for their time.

### **Measures**

Adolescents self-reported on their demographic characteristics (e.g., age, gender, romantic relationship status). Machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity, parental psychological control, and romantic relationship satisfaction were assessed using scales with Likert-type response choices. See Appendix A for complete scales.

**Romantic relationship satisfaction.** This study used a 7-item scale to evaluate romantic relationship satisfaction in Mexican adolescents that was adapted from a 10-item romantic

relationship satisfaction scale (Hendrick, 1988). An exploratory factor analysis was performed with the 10-item scale, which suggested a two-factor model. Closer examination revealed one factor contained positively worded items and the second factor contained negatively worded items. Weijters, Baumgartner, and Schillewaert (2013) described potential issues that may arise from combining positively and negatively worded items in the same scale. Such issues include individuals' preference for the positive side of a rating scale, carelessness in responding to reverse-coded items, and confirmation bias toward answering the question in the way it was worded. Thus, items 3, 6, and 10 were removed from the scale (see Appendix A).

Then, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted on the 7-positively worded item scale. Sample items included: (a) "*In general, I am satisfied with my romantic relationship*", and (b) "*I feel that my relationship is a very close one.*" Response choices ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. Scale scores were computed by averaging item scores, with higher scores suggesting that adolescents perceived higher romantic relationship satisfaction. Based on model fit indices (i.e., CFI, SRMR; see CFA on page 55), the 7-item scale proved to be a good fit with the data. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .90 (see Table 1).

**Machismo.** Machismo was assessed using a 10-item scale (Arciniega et al., 2008). Sample items included: (a) "*A man should be in control of his wife,*" and (b) "*Men are superior to women.*" Response choices ranged from 1 = *very strongly disagree* to 7 = *very strongly agree*. A composite score was calculated by averaging the 10 items together, with higher scores suggesting that adolescents hold stronger endorsements of machismo. The Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .87. In a study exploring the relationship between machismo and psychological distress in Latino adults, the machismo subscale has been found to have high reliability (i.e., alpha coefficient = .88; Herrera, Owens, & Mallinckrodt, 2013).

**Caballerismo.** Caballerismo was measured using a 10-item scale (Arciniega et al., 2008). Samples items are as follows: (a) “*Men must display good manners in public*”, and (b) “*Men should be willing to fight to defend their family*”. Participants rated items on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 = *very strongly disagree* to 7 = *very strongly agree*. The mean of the 10 items was taken to form a composite score, with higher scores indicated that adolescents endorse stronger values of caballerismo. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .93. Previous literature exploring the relationship between caballerismo and self-esteem has found this scale to have good reliability (i.e., alpha coefficient = .82; Ojeda & Piña-Watson, 2014).

**Female virginity.** Female virginity was assessed using the Female Virginity as Important scale (Deardorff et al., 2008). Participants responded to three items: “*Do you think it’s okay for girls to have sex before they are in a serious relationship?*,” “*Do you think it’s okay for girls to have sex before marriage?*,” and “*Do you think it’s okay for girls to make the first move with a guy?*” Scores were averaged across a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 = *definitely yes* to 4 = *definitely no*, with higher scores indicating stronger views of female virginity. The Cronbach’s alpha for this scale was .69. In a prior cohort of Mexican adolescents, Espinosa-Hernandez et al. (2015) found this scale to have acceptable reliability (i.e., alpha coefficient = .65.)

**Parental psychological control.** Perceived parental psychological control was assessed using items drawn from the Psychological Control Scale-Youth Self-Report (PCS-YSR; Barber, 1996) and the psychological autonomy versus psychological control subscale of Schaefer’s Children’s Report of Parent Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; 1965) with new items written by Barber, Stolz, and Olsen (2005). Sample items included: (a) “*will avoid looking at me when I have disappointed her/him,*” and (b) “*tells me of all the things she/he had done for me.*” Response choices ranged from 1 = *definitely not like him/her* to 3 = *definitely like him/her*.



Participants responded in regards to their mothers' and fathers' perceived parental psychological control separately. Two separate composite scores were calculated for mothers and fathers by averaging all 22 of their respective items, with higher scores suggesting that adolescents perceived their parents to display higher levels of psychologically controlling behaviors. The Cronbach's alphas for mothers' and fathers' psychological control were .90 and .94, respectively.

### **Data Analytic Procedures**

First, a multiple imputation was conducted to account for missing data (8.13%). As suggested by Enders (2010), 10 imputations of the study variables and interactions terms were generated using the study variables and additional auxiliary variables. Using Mplus version 6.11, a confirmatory factor analysis was run on the romantic relationship satisfaction scale, as this scale has yet to be validated in a sample of Mexican adolescents (see page 55). Pooled means, standard deviations, bivariate correlations, and unstandardized betas were calculated for the target variables using SPSS version 24.

### **Correlational Analyses**

Pearson correlations were conducted to determine the strength and direction of the bivariate relationships between each variable in the study for both male and female adolescents (see Table 2).

### **Multiple Regression Analyses**

Age, level of mothers and fathers education, and family form were statistically controlled for in the analyses. All continuous variables were mean-centered to allow for the testing of interaction effects. To assess the first research question (i.e., moderation by gender and maternal psychological control), a multiple regression was conducted to examine adolescent romantic relationship satisfaction in relation to cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of

female virginity), gender, and perceived mothers' psychological control. The second research question (i.e., moderation by gender and paternal psychological control) was assessed with a multiple regression examining adolescent romantic relationship satisfaction in relation to cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity), gender, and perceived fathers' psychological control. All cultural values were tested in one model to examine the influence of each cultural value above and beyond the influence of each other. Additionally, bivariate correlations indicated multicollinearity was not an issue. Age, mothers' education, fathers' education, family form, machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity, gender, the respective parents' psychological control, and the interactions between each cultural value and parents' psychological control, each cultural value and gender, parents' psychological control and gender, and each cultural value, gender, and parents' psychological control were entered in a single step. Main effects of each cultural value were also tested (see Tables 3, 4, and 5). The main effects of mothers' and fathers' psychological control were not explored as the primary interest of these variables was in their association between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction. Interactions were tested and only examined at the highest order, as recommended by Aiken and West (1991). Significant interactions were probed by estimating simple slopes at one standard deviation above and below the mean of the interaction variables (Aiken & West, 1991).

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Results**

A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the romantic relationship satisfaction scale was conducted to assess the fit of the measurement model. An overview of the fit indices for the different factor solutions is presented in Table 1. Goodness-of-fit was determined based on fit index cutoff values of a CFI greater than .90 and an SRMR less than .08, as suggested by Bentler (1990). Findings indicated strongest fit for a 7-item single factor scale using positively worded items.

#### **Descriptive Findings**

Bivariate correlations, means, standard deviations, skewness, and kurtosis for all study variables are presented for descriptive purposes (see Table 2). Main effects for views of female virginity, machismo, and caballerismo on romantic relationship satisfaction are presented for boys and girls in Tables 3, 4, and 5, respectively.

#### **Mothers' Psychological Control**

Results indicated one significant three-way interaction between caballerismo, gender, and mothers' psychological control on romantic relationship satisfaction (see Table 6). Simple slope analyses suggested that the positive association between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction were strongest for female adolescents who perceived low psychologically controlling behaviors from their mothers ( $b = 0.76, t = 2.12, p = .035$ ). Also, simple slope analyses indicated a significant positive association between caballerismo for boys who perceived high psychologically controlling behaviors from their mothers ( $b = .49, t = 2.66, p = .009$ ). To visually represent these results, estimated values for males and females were plotted 1 *SD* above and below the mean of perceived mothers' psychological control (See Figure 1).

**Fathers' Psychological Control**

Findings revealed no significant interactions between cultural values (i.e., female virginity, machismo, caballerismo) and perceived fathers' psychological control for neither male nor female adolescents.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Discussion**

Guided by Collins' (2003) and developmental-contextual frameworks (Chen & Rubin, 2011; Ford & Lerner, 1992), the purpose of the current study was to investigate whether adolescents' perceptions of their mothers' and fathers' psychological control moderated the associations between cultural values (i.e., machismo, caballerismo, views of female virginity) and romantic relationship satisfaction in a sample of Mexican adolescents, after controlling for age. The study also examined whether these associations differed for boys and girls. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Pardo et al., 2013), the current findings suggested that stronger endorsements of caballerismo were associated with higher relationship satisfaction. Findings also revealed that the association between caballerismo and romantic satisfaction may differ depending on mothers' and fathers' psychological control and adolescents' gender. The implications of mothers' psychological control in the association between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction in Mexican adolescent boys and girls will be discussed below.

#### **Mothers' Psychological Control and Caballerismo**

Findings revealed that the positive association between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction was strongest for female adolescents who perceived low maternal psychological control. There are a few possible reasons to why this perceived lack of intrusiveness may be beneficial for female adolescents who endorse strong views of caballerismo. First, Mexican female adolescents who endorse caballerismo may believe that their mothers' should respect their autonomy and feelings, which may be crucial to adolescents forming their sense of self. Mothers' psychologically controlling behaviors may diminish their daughters' self-esteem and hinder their identity development (Luyckx, Soenens, Vansteenkiste,

Goossens, & Berzonsky, 2007), which may ultimately reduce their romantic relationship satisfaction. On the contrary, female adolescents high on caballerismo may be able to develop a stronger sense of self in the context of low maternal psychologically controlling behaviors, which then may promote romantic independence, and ultimately foster romantic relationship satisfaction.

Another explanation for this finding is that female adolescents who perceive their mothers to engage in low psychologically controlling behaviors may sense a higher degree of support and warmth (Plunkett et al., 2007). As a result, female adolescents may feel more comfortable seeking relationship advice from their mothers without fear of being judged or criticized. Additionally, adolescents may feel a sense of approval regarding their romantic relationship, which in turn, enhances their satisfaction of their romantic relationship. Future studies should also explore the association between cultural values and relationship satisfaction in the context of perceived parental supportive behaviors.

Finally, it is possible that gender may explain why Mexican female adolescents who endorse caballerismo are at risk for poorer romantic relationship satisfaction when their mothers engage in psychologically controlling behaviors. Daughters often model their mothers and develop a sense of who they are by interacting with their same gender parent (Bandura, 1986). Thus, daughters may be particularly susceptible to the negative consequences of psychologically controlling behaviors (e.g., guilt induction, shaming) from mothers than sons (Bandura, 1986). Feelings of shame by mothers may negatively influence daughter's healthy identity development, which may put them at a higher risk for dissatisfaction in their romantic relationships. Additionally, Mexican girls are the gender minority in society, particularly in Mexico. Thus, they may be more susceptible to the negative consequences of psychological control than boys

due to other damaging societal messages of valuing boys over girls (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002).

### **Mothers' Psychological Control as a Protective Factor for Boys**

Interestingly, results indicated a *positive* association between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction in male adolescents who perceived *high* maternal psychological control. Though this initially seems counterintuitive, there are a few possible explanations for this association. First, it is important to examine the items the study used to assess psychological control such as (e.g., “tells of all the things she had done for me”, “is always telling me how I should behave”, “finishes my sentences whenever I talk”). Thus, it is possible that male adolescents who rated high on psychological control in this study may have strong, dominant maternal figures in their household. It is possible that Mexican male adolescents who endorse caballerismo with strong maternal figures are being socialized differently than females regarding how to treat women. Mothers may use psychologically controlling behaviors to teach their sons how to interact, perspective-take, or empathize with women. Future researchers should develop a caballerismo socialization scale to investigate the maternal messages mothers are giving to their sons regarding how to treat women. Additionally, Mexican male adolescents are part of the dominant gender group (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002), giving them higher status in society in a heterosexual romantic relationship.

Additionally, there is no universal interpretation of psychological control. Rudy and Halgunseth (2005) found that parental psychologically controlling behaviors conveyed different meanings between families from individualistic and collectivistic cultures. In the collectivistic cultures, parental psychologically controlling behaviors were not associated with negative child outcomes as they were in the individualistic groups. Given that Mexican cultural values endorse

collectivistic principles (e.g., family, unity), it is possible that male adolescents who perceive their mothers to be engaging in psychological control may view those behaviors as signs of concern and support. As a result, they may interpret their mothers' intrusive behaviors as interest in their romantic life, ultimately increasing their satisfaction in their romantic relationship. Future studies should also explore the associations between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of mothers' and fathers' reports of their behaviors.

Interestingly, the current study did not find any associations between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of fathers' psychological control. It is possible that in traditional Mexican households, mothers generally have a more direct role in child rearing than fathers (Cauce & Domenech-Rodríguez, 2002). Researchers have described that mothers are also more likely to spend more time with their offspring and are more engaged with their daily lives (Updegraff et al., 2009). Thus, there may be more opportunities for children to experience behaviors, such as psychologically controlling behaviors with mothers than fathers. In this study, both male and female adolescents reported higher levels of mothers' psychological control ( $M_{males}=1.86$ ;  $M_{females}=1.79$ ) than fathers' psychological control ( $M_{males}=1.79$ ;  $M_{females}=1.69$ ). Additionally, approximately 20% of adolescents reported that they were not living with their fathers. Though some adolescents who do not live with their fathers may still interact with them, it is possible that some adolescents may have little-to-no interactions with a paternal figure. To help address this issue, family structure was controlled for in all analyses.

### **Machismo and Female Virginity**

The current study did not find any associations between machismo and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of mothers' and fathers' psychological control. Previous



literature that explored machismo in Latino families assesses machismo as a one-dimensional construct with negative attributes (Beaver, Gold, & Prisco, 1992). Following the trends of current literature (e.g., Arciniega et al., 2008; Pardo et al., 2013), the current study explored both positive and negative dimensions of machismo. Hence, the study was able to assess the unique effects of each dimension on adolescent romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of parental psychological control. It should be noted that there were significant mean differences between adolescents' endorsement of machismo ( $M_{males}=2.93$ ;  $M_{females}=2.15$ ) and caballerismo ( $M_{males}=5.06$ ;  $M_{females}=5.35$ ), providing evidence for a shift in cultural norms endorsed by this current generation of Mexican adolescents. At the bivariate level, machismo was positively associated with mothers' and fathers' psychological control for girls. Girls who perceive their fathers' to be psychologically controlling may develop a schema that men are domineering and chauvinistic. Mothers' psychologically controlling behaviors may add to their daughters' schema that girls are to be in subordinate positions in society.

Also, there were no associations found between views of female virginity and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of mothers' and fathers' psychological control. One reason for this may be due to the nature of the measure used. The measure included the following items: *"Do you think it's okay for girls to have sex before they are in a serious relationship?;"* *"Do you think it's okay for girls to have sex before marriage?;"* and *"Do you think it's okay for girls to make the first move with a guy?"*. The measure may have unintentionally assessed values regarding traditional dating norms in addition to views of female virginity. The final item on this 3-item scale inquired whether it was acceptable for females to make the first move in a dating relationship (Deardorff et al., 2008). This may have contributed to the mediocre reliability of the scale (alpha coefficient=.69), leading to the null findings

regarding this measure. Future studies assessing views of female virginity should utilize items that specifically relate to female abstinence.

### **Limitations and Future Directions**

To my knowledge, this study is the first to have explored the association between cultural values rooted in gender socialization norms (i.e., views of female virginity, machismo, caballerismo) and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of perceived mothers' and fathers' psychological control in Mexican adolescents; however, it was not without limitations. First, data were cross-sectional, and collected from only two public schools in Mexico, which prevented our ability to determine the direction of the relationships between variables and to generalize outside of the sample of this study. For example, Puebla and Cholula are both located in central Mexico, and consequently, results may not be generalizable other geographic regions (e.g., states closer to the United States border). Future studies should utilize a longitudinal design and collect data from multiple geographic regions in Mexico in order to assess directionality and to allow for greater external validity.

Using self-report surveys as a means of data collection also poses as a limitation. Though participants were asked to answer survey items honestly, participants may have responded with socially desirable answers to demonstrate that they are more satisfied in their romantic relationships than they actually feel and/or have greater respect for women than they actually have. Additionally, the issue of shared method variance arises when assessing all the variables from the same respondent. Results should be interpreted with caution as the associations between variables may have been inflated. Thus, future research should measure the study variables from additional sources (e.g., parents, romantic partners). Because of the high number

of interactions tested per model (i.e., 10), future studies should replicate the design to confirm that findings not merely a result of Type 1 error.

There were limitations pertaining to the parental psychological control measure. It is possible that there was a discrepancy between adolescents' perceived parental psychological controlling behaviors and actual reports from mothers and fathers, which may have influenced the association between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction for Mexican adolescents. Future studies should also investigate mothers' and fathers' reports of their behaviors. Additionally, because psychological control is a multidimensional construct consisting of different elements (e.g., guilt induction, shame, love withdrawal) the study cannot decipher which dimensions moderate the associations between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction. Future studies should conduct a factor analysis to determine the factors of this measure, and assess the moderating effects of the measure's subscales on the association between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction. The current study cannot determine what messages adolescents received from their mothers and fathers. Given the link between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction, scholarship would benefit from the development of a caballerismo socialization scale to explore the nature of parents' gender socialization strategies. Findings regarding fathers should also be taken with caution, as it is possible these findings may have been influenced by family structure. Even though family structure was controlled for in analyses, results may have been influenced by how long adolescents knew their fathers and their family form. Approximately 20% reported not living with their biological fathers, and it could not be determined in this study how much contact they had with their fathers. Future researchers should measure how much time adolescents who do not live with their fathers actually spend with their fathers.

Additionally, views of female virginity measure yielded a low reliability coefficient ( $\alpha = .69$ ), which potentially impacted the findings of this study. Future research should include more reliable measures of the importance of female virginity in studies exploring cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction. Finally, future studies may also consider controlling for depressive symptoms, as it is likely that adolescents who are depressed may report lower romantic satisfaction.

### **Summary**

To my knowledge, the current study is the first to explore the associations between cultural values and romantic relationship satisfaction in the context of parental psychological control, a parenting behavior prevalent in Mexico (Bronstein, 1994). Findings from this study point to the influential role caballerismo plays in adolescent relationship satisfaction in Mexico, and how this association differs depending on adolescent gender and perceptions of maternal psychological control. It also has implications for practitioners who work with Mexican adolescents and their parents.

Mental health practitioners and school counselors working with female Mexican adolescents who report poor romantic relationship satisfaction and high levels of caballerismo may consider working with mothers in these families and teaching them about positive parenting behaviors. In turn, they could raise mothers' attention to the negative impact shaming and intrusive parenting behaviors may have on their daughter's identity development and ability to develop healthy relationships with others. Findings may also be useful for practitioners working with male Mexican adolescents as the results provide evidence for gender differences in the interpretation of parental psychologically controlling behaviors. In addition, practitioners should recognize that psychologically controlling behaviors may serve as a protective factor for

Mexican adolescent boys who endorse high values of caballerismo, as these boys are comfortable with having strong female figures in their lives.

Findings from this study also suggest that researchers should continue to assess the positive and negative dimensions of machismo separately. Results provide evidence for a cultural shift in gender role values, as both male and female adolescents reported significantly higher values of caballerismo than machismo. Future studies assessing views of female virginity should confirm that items used to measure female virginity are only measuring perceptions of female abstinence. Doing so may ensure that the measure is not assessing other dimensions of gender related values pertaining to dating norms. Results also indicate that future studies should continue to assess adolescents' perceptions of mothers' and fathers' behaviors separately. Consistent with previous literature (e.g., Blocklin et al., 2011; Updegraff et al., 2009), the current findings provide evidence that mothers and fathers make unique contribution to their adolescents' development.

Finally, schools should provide support to their students as they begin to engage in the normative adolescent process of dating. Workshops in schools can help Mexican adolescents navigate their romantic relationships by socializing them to normative dating behaviors. Given the positive association between caballerismo and romantic relationship satisfaction for both male and female Mexican adolescents, workshops may also promote caballerismo values to adolescents involved in romantic relationships.

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**Table 1***Goodness-of-Fit Indicators of Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Scale (N=214)*

Model	$\alpha$	AIC	BIC	$\chi^2$	df	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Two Factor (10 items)	.87	7131.35	7235.70	153.96***	34	.87	.13	.08
Single Factor (7 items)	.90	5661.97	5732.65	66.02***	14	.93	.13	.04

\*\*\* $p < .001$ .

**Table 2***Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations (SD) for Study Variables by Gender (boys=106; girls =108)*

Variables	Male <i>M (SD)</i>	Female <i>M (SD)</i>	<i>Skew</i>	<i>Kurt</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1. Romantic satisfaction	4.94 (1.62)	5.07 (1.51)	-.73	-.37		.22*	.12	.17	-.11	.01	-.02	.50**	-.19	-.17
2. Age	14.55 (1.69)	14.68 (1.74)	.86	.20	.31**		.19	.23*	.03	-.29**	-.04	.26**	-.17	-.18
3. Mothers' education <sup>a</sup>	6.66 (3.73)	6.78 (4.02)	-.05	-1.14	.24*	.15		.77**	-.13	-.08	.14	.18	-.14	-.01
4. Fathers' education <sup>a</sup>	7.42 (3.99)	7.02 (3.93)	-.17	-1.16	.09	.15	.65**		-.03	-.07	.16	.19	-.16	-.09
5. Family form <sup>b</sup>	2.12 (1.93)	1.83 (1.63)	1.54	.91	-.16	.14	.12	-.02		-.05	-.03	.04	.00	-.13
6. Female virginity	2.34 (.82)	2.93 (.74)	-.28	-.60	-.09	-.23*	-.13	-.17	-.13		-.01	.01	.10	.05
7. Machismo	2.93 (1.11)	2.15 (1.00)	.68	.15	-.12	-.01	-.37**	-.21*	-.06	.05		.16	.18	.20
8. Caballerismo	5.06 (1.71)	5.35 (1.31)	-.96	.11	.42**	.30**	.15	.12	-.10	-.03	-.11		-.19	-.15
9. Mothers' psych control	1.86 (.41)	1.79 (.46)	.36	-.47	-.14	-.00	-.09	-.07	.01	-.08	.24*	-.12		.58**
10. Fathers' psych control	1.79 (.44)	1.69 (.44)	.44	-.41	-.19	-.15	-.31**	-.26*	-.09	.03	.30*	-.22*	.60**	

*Note.* Correlations below diagonal are for female adolescents and above diagonal are for male adolescents;

<sup>a</sup>no schooling completed=1, some elementary school=2, elementary school complete=3, some middle school=4, middle school completed=5, some high school=6, high school graduate or equivalency=7, some college=8, associate degree=9, bachelor's degree=10, master's degree=11, professional school degree=12, doctorate degree=13;

<sup>b</sup>birth mother and birth father=1, birth father and stepmother=2, birth mother and stepfather=3, birth father only=4, birth mother only=5, adoptive parents=6, other=7;

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 3**

*Summary of Results of Views of Female Virginity Predicting  
Adolescents' Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (N=214)*

	Romantic Satisfaction	
	<i>b</i> (boys)	<i>b</i> (girls)
Age	0.22*	0.27**
Mothers' Education	-0.03	0.13**
Fathers' Education	0.07	-0.08
Family Form	-0.10	-0.23*
Female Virginity	0.15	-0.09
	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup> 0.09	0.21**

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 4**

*Summary of Results of Machismo Predicting  
Adolescents' Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (N=214)*

	Romantic Satisfaction	
	<i>b</i> (boys)	<i>b</i> (girls)
Age	0.19	0.28**
Mothers' Education	-0.03	0.12*
Fathers' Education	0.07	-0.07
Family Form	-0.10	-0.23*
Machismo	-0.05	-0.06
$R^2$	0.09	0.21**

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 5**

*Summary of Results of Caballerismo Predicting  
Adolescents' Romantic Relationship Satisfaction (N=214)*

	Romantic Satisfaction	
	<i>b</i> (boys)	<i>b</i> (girls)
Age	0.10	0.20*
Mothers' Education	-0.05	0.11*
Fathers' Education	0.05	-0.07
Family Form	-0.12	-0.19*
Caballerismo	0.48**	0.35**
$R^2$	0.29**	0.30**

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

**Table 6**

*Summary of Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Adolescents' Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Moderated by Mothers' Psychological Control (N=214)*

	Romantic Satisfaction	
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>
Age	0.16*	0.07
Mothers' Education	0.05	0.04
Fathers' Education	-0.03	0.04
Family Form	-0.14*	0.06
Female Virginity (FV)	0.01	0.19
Machismo (M)	-0.13	0.11
Caballerismo (C)	0.37**	0.07
Gender <sup>a</sup> (G)	-0.25	0.24
Mothers' Psychological Control (MPC)	-0.25	0.29
FV X MPC	0.16	0.34
FV X G	-0.17	0.28
M X MPC	-0.29	0.27
M X G	0.12	0.21
C X MPC	0.12	0.18
C X G	-0.05	0.14
G X MPC	-0.32	0.58
FV X MPC X G	0.03	0.49
M X MPC X G	-0.05	0.51
C X MPC X G	-0.56*	0.28
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.32**	

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>male=0, female=1;

Pooled results are presented.

\**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01.

**Table 7**

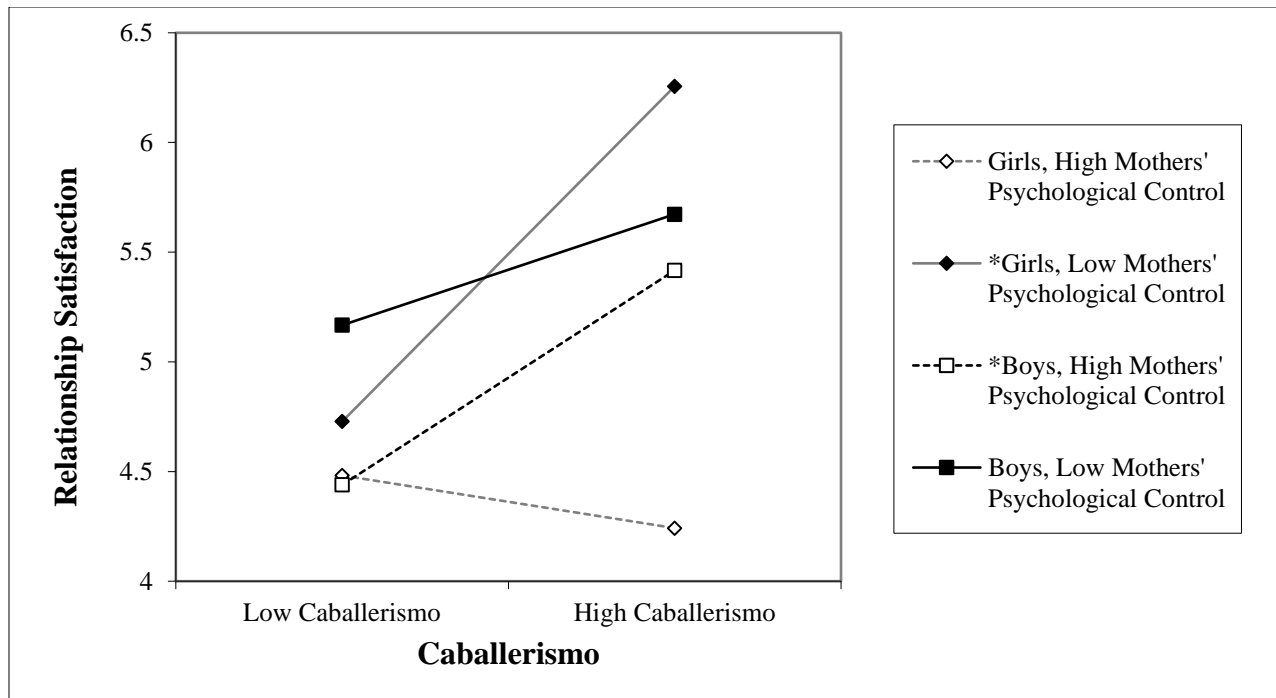
*Summary of Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Adolescents' Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Moderated by Fathers' Psychological Control (N=214)*

	Romantic Satisfaction	
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>
Age	0.14	0.07
Mothers' Education	0.05	0.04
Fathers' Education	-0.03	0.04
Family Form	-0.14*	0.06
Female Virginity (FV)	0.01	0.20
Machismo (M)	-0.08	0.11
Caballerismo (C)	0.39**	0.08
Gender <sup>a</sup> (G)	-0.20	0.25
Fathers' Psychological Control (FPC)	-0.27	0.30
FV X FPC	0.16	0.45
FV X G	-0.18	0.30
M X FPC	-0.04	0.24
M X G	0.05	0.22
C X FPC	0.06	0.18
C X G	-0.05	0.15
G X FPC	-0.03	0.55
FV X FPC X G	0.06	0.65
M X FPC X G	0.14	0.53
C X FPC X G	-0.04	0.36
<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	0.31**	

*Note.* <sup>a</sup>male=0, female=1;

Pooled results are presented.

\**p* < .05. \*\**p* < .01.



Note. \*indicates associations are significant at  $p < .05$ .

Figure 1. Estimated level of romantic relationship satisfaction by gender predicted by level of caballerismo, stratified by low ( $-1 SD$ ) and high ( $+1 SD$ ) levels of perceived mothers' psychological control.



## Appendix A

Adapted Romantic Relationship Satisfaction Scale (Hendrick, 1988)

*If you are currently in a dating relationship, please answer the following questions. If not in a dating relationship, currently, please skip to the next section.*

	<i>Strongly disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat disagree</i>	<i>Disagree more than agree</i>	<i>Neither disagree nor agree</i>	<i>Agree more than disagree</i>	<i>Somewhat agree</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>
1. In general, I am satisfied with my relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I think my relationship is good compared to others'.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Sometimes I wish I hadn't gotten into this relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My relationship meets my original expectations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am attracted to my partner very much.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I wish there were more excitements in our relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I like the way that my partner and I resolve conflicts and arguments.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I feel that my relationship is a very close one.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. The communication between my partner and me is good.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I wish we had more intimacy and closeness in our relationship.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

*Note.* Items 3, 6, and 10 were omitted in the study.

Machismo (items 1-10) and Caballerismo (items 11-20; Arciniega et al., 2008)

*For the items below, please indicate the extent of your agreement with each statement.*

	Very Strongly Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Very Strongly Agree
1. Men are superior to women.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. In a family, a father's wish is law.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. The birth of a male child is more important than a female child.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. It is important not to be the weakest man in a group.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. Real men never let down their guard.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. It would be shameful for a man to cry in front of his children.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. A man should be in control of his wife.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. A man knows it is necessary to fight when challenged.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. It is important for women to be beautiful.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. The bills (electric, phone, etc.) should be in the man's name.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Men must display good manners in public.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Men should be affectionate with their children.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. Men should respect their elders.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. A woman is expected to be loyal to her husband.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Men must exhibit fairness in all situations.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. Men should be willing to fight to defend their family.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. The family is more important than the individual.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Men hold their mothers in high regard.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. A real man does not brag about sex.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Men want their children to have better lives than themselves.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Views of Female Virginity (Deardorff, Tschann, & Flores, 2008)

Please tell us your opinion about the following:	Definitely Yes	Yes	No	Definitely No
1. Do you think it's okay for girls to have sex before they are in a serious relationship?	1	2	3	4
2. Do you think it's okay for girls to have sex before marriage?	1	2	3	4
3. Do you think it's okay for girls to make the first move with a guy?	1	2	3	4

### Parental Psychological Control

Adapted from the Psychological Control Scale-Youth Self-Report (PCS-YSR; Barber, 1996) and the psychological autonomy versus psychological control subscale of Schaefer's Children's Report of Parent Behavior Inventory (CRPBI; 1965) with new items written by Barber et al. (2005).

*The following questions are about your mother and father; please circle your responses for your mother (left) and father (right). 1= Definitely not like her/him, 2= Somewhat like her/him, 3= Definitely like her/him*

Mother			Item: In general, my mother/father...	Father		
1	2	3	1. tells me of all the things she/he had done for me	1	2	3
1	2	3	2. says, if I really cared for her/him, I would not do things that cause her/him to worry	1	2	3
1	2	3	3. is always telling me how I should behave	1	2	3
1	2	3	4. would like to be able to tell me what to do all the time	1	2	3
1	2	3	5. wants to control whatever I do	1	2	3
1	2	3	6. is always trying to change me	1	2	3
1	2	3	7. only keeps rules when it suits her/him	1	2	3
1	2	3	8. is less friendly with me, if I do not see things her/his way	1	2	3
1	2	3	9. will avoid looking at me when I have disappointed her/him	1	2	3
1	2	3	10. have hurt her/his feelings, stops talking to me if I please her/him again	1	2	3
1	2	3	11. changes the subject, whenever I have something to say	1	2	3
1	2	3	12. finishes my sentences whenever I talk	1	2	3
1	2	3	13. often interrupts me	1	2	3
1	2	3	14. acts like she/he knows what I am thinking or feeling	1	2	3
1	2	3	15. would like to be able to tell me how to feel or think about things all the time	1	2	3
1	2	3	16. is always trying to change how I feel or think about things	1	2	3
1	2	3	17. blames me for other family members' problems	1	2	3
1	2	3	18. brings up my past mistakes when she/he criticizes me	1	2	3
1	2	3	19. tells me that I am not a loyal or good member of the family	1	2	3
1	2	3	20. is less friendly with me, if I do not see things her/his way	1	2	3
1	2	3	21. often changes her/his moods when with me	1	2	3
1	2	3	22. goes back and forth between being warm and critical toward me	1	2	3